

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:

5 1. A method of transmitting an information transfer request from a client data terminal, which is coupled to a local area network, to a called data terminal which is coupled to said local area network and a public switched telephone network, said method comprising the steps of:

10 collecting information sets of communication capabilities of a plurality of different data terminals on said local area network at an arbitrary time on said client data terminal, said different data terminals being coupled to said local area network and said public switched telephone network and including said called data terminal;

storing said information sets of communication capabilities into a memory;

15 generating on said client data terminal facsimile image information by reference to one of said stored information sets of communication capabilities pertaining to said called data terminal;

20 creating on said client data terminal an information transfer request for requesting transmission of said facsimile image information to an arbitrary facsimile machine connected to said public switched telephone network;

sending said information transfer request from said client data terminal to a communications controller; and

transmitting said information transfer request from said communications controller to said called data terminal through said local area network upon a completion of said sending step.

5 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said information transfer request includes a telephone number of said arbitrary facsimile machine, said facsimile image information to be transmitted, property information of said facsimile image information, and identification information identifying said
10 called data terminal.

 3. The method of Claim 2, wherein each of said information sets of communication capabilities of said different data terminals collected in the collecting step includes
15 information identifying at least a connection for specifying one of said registered different data terminals, an image resolution, a recording sheet size, encoding/decoding functions.

 4. The method of Claim 2, further comprising the steps
20 of:

 judging whether said facsimile image information to be transmitted has been encoded using an encoding function which is lower grade than said encoding/decoding functions of said stored

information set; and

converting said facsimile image information to be transmitted using said encoding/decoding functions registered in said memory during said storing step when a result of said
5 judging step determines that said facsimile image information to be transmitted is lower grade.

10 5. The method of Claim 1, wherein said communications controller has a default condition in which said communications controller is normally conditioned to send the information transfer request to a specific data terminal from among said different data terminals in said memory, and can be released from said default condition and be set to a different data terminal when said client data terminal specifies another called data
15 terminal to send said information transfer request.

6. A client data terminal which is coupled to a local area network, comprising:

20 a first communications device that generates facsimile image information by reference to information of communication capabilities of a called data terminal to which said first communications device requests to send such facsimile image information and then performs a standard facsimile communications operation with respect to an information transfer request for

requesting a transmission of said facsimile image information to an arbitrary facsimile machine connected to a public switched telephone network, said called data terminal being one of a plurality of different data terminals coupled to said local area network and said public switched telephone network;

a memory; and

a second communications device that performs at an arbitrary time the standard communications operation with at least one of said plurality of different data terminals to receive information sets of communication capabilities of said at least one of said plurality of different data terminals and stores such information into said memory, that performs the standard facsimile communications operation with said first communications device to send from said memory one of said information sets of communication capabilities which pertain to said called data terminal, and that performs the standard facsimile communications operation with said first communications device to receive said information transfer request, and that performs the standard facsimile communications operation, using said information transfer request received from said first communications device, with said called data terminal through said local area network after completing the standard facsimile communications operation with said first communications device,

said second communications device being operatively connected to said first communications device and to said plurality of different data terminals via said local area network.

5 7. The client data terminal of Claim 6, wherein said second communications device controls said standard facsimile communications operation with said first communications device to perform throughout a plurality of facsimile communications steps which are defined as phases A through to E in accordance with a
10 Group 3 facsimile communications procedure.

 8. The client data terminal of Claim 6, wherein said information transfer request includes a telephone number of said arbitrary facsimile machine, said facsimile image information to
15 be transmitted, property information of said facsimile image information, and identification information identifying said called data terminal.

20 9. The client data terminal of Claim 6, wherein each of said information sets of communication capabilities of said different data terminals sent from said first communications device to said second communications device includes information identifying at least a connection for specifying one of said registered different data terminals, an image resolution, a

recording sheet size, encoding/decoding functions.

10. The client data terminal of Claim 6, wherein said second communications device can convert said information transfer request sent from said first communications device, using said encoding/decoding functions registered in said memory as the information of communication capabilities of said called data terminal, when an encoding function used by said first communications device for conversion of said information transfer request is lower grade than said registered encoding/decoding functions.

11. The client data terminal of Claim 6, wherein said first communications device has a default condition, in which said first communications device is normally conditioned to send the information transfer request to a specific data terminal from among said different data terminals registered in said memory, and can be released from said default condition and be set to another different data terminal when said first communications device specifies another called data terminal.

12. A client data terminal which is coupled to a local area network, comprising:

first communications means for generating facsimile image information by reference to information of communication capabilities of a called data terminal to which said first communications device requests to send such facsimile image information and then performs a standard facsimile communications operation with respect to an information transfer request for requesting a transmission of said facsimile image information to an arbitrary facsimile machine connected to a public switched telephone network, said called data terminal being one of a plurality of different data terminals coupled to said local area network and said public switched telephone network; memory means; and

second communications means for performing at an arbitrary time the standard communications operation with at least one of said plurality of different data terminals to receive information sets of communication capabilities of said at least one of said plurality of different data terminals and stores such information into said memory means, performing the standard facsimile communications operation with said first communications means to send from said memory means one of said information sets of communication capabilities which pertain to said called data terminal, and performing the standard facsimile communications operation with said first communications means to receive said information transfer request, and performing the standard

facsimile communications operation, using said information transfer request received from said first communications means, with said called data terminal through said local area network after completing the standard facsimile communications operation
5 with said first communications means, said second communications means being operatively connected to said first communications means and to said plurality of different data terminals via said local area network.

10 13. The client data terminal of Claim 12, wherein said second communications means controls said standard facsimile communications operation with said first communications means to perform throughout a plurality of facsimile communications steps which are defined as phases A through to E in accordance with a
15 Group 3 facsimile communications procedure.

20 14. The client data terminal of Claim 12, wherein said information transfer request includes a telephone number of said arbitrary facsimile machine, said facsimile image information to be transmitted, property information of said facsimile image information, and identification information identifying said called data terminal.

15. The client data terminal of Claim 12, wherein each of said information sets of communication capabilities of said different data terminals sent from said first communications means to said second communications means includes information identifying at least a connection for specifying one of said registered different data terminals, an image resolution, a recording sheet size, encoding/decoding functions.

16. The client data terminal of Claim 12, wherein said second communications means can convert said information transfer request sent from said first communications means, using said encoding/decoding functions registered in said memory means as the information of communication capabilities of said called data terminal, when an encoding function used by said first communications means for conversion of said information transfer request is lower grade than said registered encoding/decoding functions.

17. The client data terminal of Claim 12, wherein said first communications means has a default condition, in which said first communications means is normally conditioned to send the information transfer request to a specific data terminal from among said different data terminals registered in said memory means, and can be released from said default condition and be set

to another different data terminal when said first communications means specifies another called data terminal.

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